Spring Greening of PCs

Spring has finally sprung on the Costa Tropical bringing with it seasonal fresh fruit and veggies, warmer temperatures, allergies, and this year, elections. Inasmuch as we love our environment of sun, sea and clear skies, most people are unaware of the damage the ubiquitous PC is doing to the environment. The universal drive for newer, faster and better technology (leading to greater productivity) is having a serious environmental impact too. The media has shown us those sad images of children playing in the midst of a smoldering, toxic e-waste dump. 80% of e-waste comes from businesses, but more and more homeowners are joining this percentage. So what can we do to mitigate e-waste?

The most obvious positive recourse is to recycle/donate your old PC to schools, church organizations, rehab centers, community groups and so on. Just because you want a faster, more updated PC doesn't mean your old one has to bite the e-waste dust; oftentimes older PCs are sent to Third and Fourth world countries for use in rural schools, hospitals, clinics, and even small businesses because they desperately need this technology but cannot afford it. The organization, Habitat for Humanity, can help in your selection of country - **http://redemtech.com/seriousgood/habitat-for-humanity.aspx**

What else can we do? (1) Shut down/sleep/hibernate your PC when not in use to conserve energy. All you need to do is go to the power settings of your PC and select the optimal energy use…and remember, less energy is required when hibernating than sleeping.

(2) Assuming you already use a power surge protector (a real necessity around here), get in the habit of turning this off when not in use. Anything plugged into it draws power continuously unless you flip the switch off.

(3) Change your printing habits. Whenever possible, keep emails, website articles, photos and so on on someone else's server. Do you really need to print out those daily jokes, puzzles or articles? Save them in your email, organize your mail folders into categories and use this virtual office space rather than adding ills to the environment. Then check out "Green Print," a software program that minimizes the waste on a printed page: go to **http://www.printgreener.com/1.**

(4) Educate yourself when shopping for a new computer; find out more about "Green PCs and who's producing them." Green PCs are especially designed to minimize power consumption. They draw less power than normal computers, and support sleep modes.

Many of us spend a great part of the day sitting in front of the keyboard or on a tablet PC. A few small changes can go a long way toward reducing our negative impact of our planet's fragile environment.